



## Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) affecting Assessed Work – Student Guide

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## Introduction

You may submit an electronic claim for personal extenuating circumstances, which have significantly affected your assessed work. This should relate to serious mental/physical illness or serious personal trauma, which would normally be unforeseen and unpreventable. **It is important to recognise that a PEC is not for a disability, long-term medical condition or specific learning disability. Such conditions should be addressed by discussion with the Disability and Dyslexia Support Team to establish what long-term adjustments by the University may be appropriate.**

## Key points

1. A PEC must be submitted as soon as possible and no later than the published deadline for the period in which the affected work is assessed, e.g. semester 1. If you cannot provide supporting evidence by then, you should still begin to make an electronic claim to meet the deadline and state when you are likely to be able to submit the evidence and provide/upload the evidence as soon as possible afterwards. A PEC will only be considered if you subsequently submit the supporting evidence by the deadline or by a specific date agreed by the Student Progress Team.
  - 1.1. Claims submitted after the deadline will not normally be considered unless there is a valid reason for this, which you can evidence. If you wish to raise a claim for extenuating circumstances after the Programme Assessment Board (PAB) has met, you should do this using the University's Appeals Procedure, ensuring that you provide and evidence a valid reason for not submitting a PEC claim by the relevant deadline see Handbook of Student Regulations, which can be found at [www.northumbria.ac.uk/handbook](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/handbook)
2. If you are unable to submit work by the assessment deadline/attend an exam please do contact Student Central via your portal chat; in person; or by email as soon as possible if you need further advice on submitting a claim or providing evidence.  
[ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk)
3. When making a claim you should clearly describe and evidence the circumstances and the impact those circumstances have had on your ability to study; identify which component/s of assessment are affected (with relevant timing).
4. Exceptionally, a written statement may be accepted from a guidance/personal tutor where external corroboration cannot be provided. The member of staff you have discussed the circumstances with may be asked to provide contextual information on the claim, they can only do so if you had previously discussed this with them at the relevant time and they have witnessed the impact on you.
5. Claims are considered by the Student Progress Team as they are submitted and prior to the Programme Assessment Board (PAB), which is normally held at the end of each academic stage. If necessary, the University will make enquiries to confirm the circumstances claimed.
6. A particularly sensitive claim may be submitted confidentially to the Student Progress Manager for your faculty. Please make enquiries via your portal chat; in person, or by email as soon as possible to [ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk).

7. Accepted claims are taken into consideration by the PAB taking account of any work completed, the overall profile of marks. The PAB is normally held at the end of the academic stage. The PAB will not be made aware of the circumstances claimed for, only that a valid claim has been accepted for a particular assessment component.
8. The Student Progress Team will advise you on the decisions made on the PEC claim. Any queries should be directed to the [ask4help team](#): via your portal chat; in person; or by email as soon as possible to [ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk)
9. When you have received details of your results (after the PAB) then decisions made in response to your claims will be indicated on your Student Module Record Form (SMRF). If you require further explanation of how your accepted PEC claim has impacted on your overall academic decision please contact the [ask4help team](#): via your portal chat; in person; or by email as soon as possible to. [ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ask4help@northumbria.ac.uk)

If extenuating circumstances are likely to affect your ability to continue studying, seek advice from your guidance/personal tutor (*or other appropriate member of staff*).

<b>Normally acceptable circumstances &amp; required evidence</b> <i>(If not in English, a translation must be submitted together with the original Evidence.) (3<sup>rd</sup> party information should not be used due to data protection.)</i>	
<b>Tragic personal circumstances:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• death of family member or close friend <b>just prior to or during</b> the relevant assessment period</li> <li>• serious illness of family member or close friend just prior to or during the relevant assessment period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sight of death certificate, order of service, obituary notice (or photocopy). (If the timing of the bereavement does not directly relate to the assessment period, further Independent corroboration of the impact on your ability to complete assessments will be required).</li> <li>• Independent corroboration of impact on your ability to complete an assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>Serious ill health</b> , which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an acute episode of a disability or chronic condition affecting performance but not covered by special examination provision;</li> <li>• Complication arising from pregnancy.</li> <li>• Significant personal accident or injury.</li> <li>• Depression or acute anxiety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical evidence, which specifically relates to you, e.g. fit note or signed/stamped <a href="#">student medical form</a>, <b>and</b> which specifically relates to the timing of the claim.</li> <li>• Independent corroboration of the impact on your ability to complete an assessment</li> </ul>



<b>Normally acceptable circumstances &amp; required evidence</b> <i>(If not in English, a translation must be submitted together with the original Evidence.)</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> party information should not be used due to data protection.)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acute personal or emotional trauma, e.g. acute anxiety or depression, family breakdown, breakdown of close personal relationship.</li><li>• Exceptional and unexpected changes to employment circumstances (part-time students only).</li><li>• Jury service.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent corroboration of the impact of those circumstances or appropriate medical note e.g. statement from GP or Counsellor or exceptionally from your Personal/Guidance Tutor.</li><li>• A letter from an employer about exceptional and unexpected changes to employment circumstances (part-time students only).</li><li>• Documentary evidence of jury service.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impact of natural disaster, civil disruption or other major hazard.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent and non-specific corroboration such as press articles/cuttings, provided home residence can be verified against University records. In such cases, however, details of how you have been directly affected as a student should be outlined in your supporting statement (details of family connections and concerns, attempts to make contact, support you have sought in the UK etc).</li></ul>



#### Normally unacceptable circumstances

- Employment commitments of full-time students.
- Long-term medical conditions (*follow link to Ongoing Disability/Medical Condition highlighted below*).
- Pregnancy without complications. (Impact on examinations or attendance, to enable you to attend antenatal appointments etc., should be discussed with the Student Progress and Welfare teams).
- Routine or long-term domestic or caring responsibilities should be discussed with the Student Progress and Welfare teams.
- Normal exam stress or anxiety experienced during revision or the assessment period, unless corroborated by medical evidence as a chronic condition and undergoing treatment. Non-serious domestic or personal disruptions (financial difficulties, moving house, change of job, holidays, normal job pressure, failed travel arrangements, oversleeping).
- Term-time personal arrangements (e.g. holiday, wedding) made after starting the programme.
- Study related circumstances (equipment failure, failure to take back-up copies of stolen or corrupted work, bunching of deadlines, examinations too close together, missing books, examination re-scheduling, misreading the examination timetable, taking the wrong examination).
- Sporting commitments, except for elite athletes who are members of governing body talent camps/academies or students undertaking a coaching course funded by Team Northumbria or a governing body (in which case a letter) from the provider/funder confirming student's participation and dates affected would be required.

**NB** For information on **Late Submission of Work and Extension Requests**, or **Ongoing support for long-term disability or medical condition**, please refer to [My Course information](#) on your student portal